

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

For Release: **IMMEDIATE**
Date: July 22, 2203

Contact: Cari Boyce
Phone: 919/733-5612

GOV. EASLEY URGES FEDS TO SUPPORT DOMESTIC TEXTILE INDUSTRY

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley today called on President Bush and the U.S. Trade Representative to support the domestic textile industry and change the direction of its international trade policies. Specifically, Easley called on the administration to withdraw from the recent trade agreement with Vietnam, start aggressively combating the widespread dumping of textile goods on U.S. markets, address the failure of trading partners to open their markets to our products, take action to curb currency manipulation, devote sufficient resources to fight illegal smuggling and customs fraud and initiate the “special China safeguard” on sensitive textile and apparel categories to control the unfair surge of Chinese imports into the United States market.

“Federal trade policies continue to be made with little or no regard for their impact on US workers in traditional manufacturing industries,” said Easley. “Since 2001, more than 50,000 jobs in our textile, apparel and furniture industries have disappeared due to our poorly designed and executed policies. These industries now represent about 5 percent of North Carolina’s total employment, but account for over 75 percent of our net job losses since 2001.

“We have seen plant after plant in North Carolina close, and the continuation of these federal trade policies is devastating to our communities. We realize that we are in a transitioning economy, but Washington is pulling the rug out from under us. It is past time for the federal government to put a halt to these deficient policies and provide some assistance to these communities in need.”

Easley sent a letter to the US Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick and a copy to President Bush today. The text of the letter follows:

July 22, 2003

Ambassador Robert B. Zoellick
US Trade Representative
600 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Zoellick:

Governor's Press Office
State Capitol, Raleigh, NC 27603-8001
(919) 733-5612 - Toll Free 1-800-662-7005
FAX (919) 733-5166